

DE SA MAJESTÉ
An E P I S T L E

FROM THE

King of P R U S S I A,

TO
Monfieur VOLTAIRE.

In FRENCH and ENGLISH.

[Price Six-pence.]

L O N D R E :
Chez R. et J. DODSLEY en Pall-mall. 1758.

ÉPIÔTRE

DE SA MAJESTÉ

Le Roi de PRUSSE,

Monsieur VOLTAIRE.



LONDRE :

Chez R. et J. DODSLEY en Pall-mall. 1758.

Frederick II. K

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T O

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Translated into ENGLISH from the ORIGINAL FRENCH.



L O N D O N

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É P I T R E

DE SA MAJESTÉ

Le Roi de P R U S S E.

CROYEZ que si j'étois, VOLTAIRE,
Particulier aujourd'hui,

Me contentant du nécessaire,

Je verrois envoler la fortune légère,

Et m'en mocquerois comme lui.

Je connois l'ennui des grandeurs,

Le fardeau des devoirs, le jargon des flatteurs,

Et tout l'amas des petitesse,



Et



An EPISTLE
FROM THE
King of PRUSSIA, &c.

VOLTAIRE, believe me, were I now
In private life's calm station plac'd,

Let Heav'n for nature's wants allow,

With cold indifference would I view

Departing Fortune's winged haste

And at the Goddess laugh like you.

Th' insipid farce of tedious state,

Imperial duty's real weight,

The faithless courtier's supple bow,

Et leurs genres et leurs especes,
 Dont il faut s'occuper dans le sein des honneurs,
 Je meprise la vaine gloire,
 Quoique Poëte et Souverain,
 Quand du Ciseau fatal retranchant mon destin
 Atropos m'aura vu plongé dans la nuit noire,
 Que m'importe l'honneur incertain
 De vivre apres ma mort au temple de Memoire :
 Un instant de bonheur vaut mille ans dans l'histoire,
 Nos destins sont ils donc si beaux ?

The fickle multitude's caress,
And flatt'rer's wordy emptiness,
By long experience well I know;
And, tho' a Prince and Poet born,
Vain blandishments of Glory scorn.
For when the ruthless shears of Fate
Have cut my life's precarious thread,
And rank'd me with th' unconscious dead,
What wilt avail that I *was* great,
Or that th' uncertain tongue of Fame
In Mem'ry's temple chaunts my name?
One blissful moment whilst we live
Weighs more than ages of renown;
What then do Potentates receive
Of good, peculiarly their own?

Sweet

Le doux Plaisir et la Mollesse,
 La vive et naïve Allegresse
 Ont toujours fui des grands, la pompe, et les faisceaux,
 Nes pour la liberté leurs troupes enchantresses
 Preferent l'aimable paresse
 Aux austeres devoirs guides de nos travaux.
 Aussi la Fortune volage
 N'a jamais causé mes ennuis,
 Soit qu'elle m'agace, ou qu'elle m'outrage,
 Je dormirai toutes les nuits
 En lui refusant mon hommage,
 Mais notre etat nous fait la loi,
 Il nous oblige, il nous engage
 A mesurer notre courage,
 Sur ce qu'exige notre emploi.

Sweet Ease and unaffected Joy,
 Domestic Peace, and sportive Pleasure,
 The regal throne and palace fly,
 And, born for liberty, prefer
 Soft silent scenes of lovely leisure,
 To, what we Monarchs buy so dear,
 The thorny pomp of scepter'd care.
 My pain or bliss shall ne'er depend
 On fickle Fortune's casual flight,
 For, whether she's my foe or friend,
 In calm repose I'll pass the night;
 And ne'er by watchful homage own
 I court her smile, or fear her frown.
 But from our stations we derive
 Unerring precepts how to live,
 And certain deeds each rank calls forth,
 By which is measur'd human worth.

Voltaire dans son hermitage,
 Dans un pais dont l'heritage
 Est son antique, bonne foi,
 Peut s'addonner en paix a la vertu du sage
 Dont Platon nous marque la loi
 Pour moi menacé du naufrage,
 Je dois, en affrontant l'orage,
 Penser, vivre, et mourir en Roi.

F. L. N.

Voltaire, within his private cell
 In realms where ancient honesty
 Is patrimonial property,
 And sacred Freedom loves to dwell,
 May give up all *his* peaceful mind,
 Guided by Plato's deathless page,
 In silent solitude resign'd
 To the mild virtues of a Sage;
 But I, 'gainst whom wild whirlwinds wage
 Fierce war with wreck-denouncing wing,
 Must be, to face the tempest's rage,
 In thought, in life, and death a King.

THE END.

Voltaire, within his private cell
 In realms where ancient honesty
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